



From the desk of City Manager Teresa Wilson

City Manager's Month in Review for September 2013

Happy Fall, Columbia!

October 1, 2013

- **The Build Columbia Blueprint to Run, Grow and Transform City government is Management's attempt to implement policy with a LEAN approach to government. City staff and I are well underway with this initiative and look forward to updating City Council at today's work session with several efforts that have been developed over the last few months. As we streamline processes, we are emphasizing the customer experience and seeking to reduce the complexity of doing business in the City.**

Today's update to City Council will include processes that have been streamlined in Planning & Development Services and Business License, as well as new initiatives underway in Parking, the Customer Care Center and Human Resources.

In addition, our brand new website launches today!

- Mr. Wayne Gregory was introduced as the City's new Director of Economic Development. Wayne has delivered the final version of the **new Economic Development Strategic Plan** to City Council and begun implementation of the various recommendations. These recommendations are in line with many as identified by the Columbia Chamber's Business Friendly Taskforce, to include the hiring of a new Business and Development Manager position.
- City of Columbia **safety and security** remains a priority for Interim Chief Ruben Santiago and the CPD team. With the holiday season approaching, the Columbia Police Department has devoted time and resources to identifying where additional officers are needed to patrol the various Hospitality Districts in the City. Specifically, CPD has increased police presence in the downtown area to serve as a visible crime deterrent. We will also highlight additional efforts going on in each region in next month's City Manager's Review.

Ideally and depending on the type of activity on any given day, 7 to 12 Officers can be allocated to several key locations. This has been accomplished by assigning:

- **2 Foot Patrol Officers on Main St;** Focusing on high visibility and meeting with businesses to gather information on quality of life issues.
- **2 Foot Patrol Officers in the Vista;** Focusing on high visibility and meeting with businesses to gather information on quality of life issues.

- **3 Officers in vehicles** patrolling key positions of Bull Street and the Elmwood area, Elmwood and Main Street area (Cotton Town neighborhoods) and Main and Calhoun Street area.
- **4 Officers from the Hospitality Safety Team;** focusing their attention on Taylor and Assembly Streets across from the Oliver Gospel Mission. These Officers spend majority of their time on weekly special assignments patrolling the Downtown area and parks during peak hours of the night and day. These Officers also adjust their schedules to service the night life in the downtown areas of Main Street, Vista, and Five Points. Periodically these Officers will partner up with members of the Zoning Department and Fire Marshals Service to conduct compliance checks in the Hospitality districts.
- **1 PACE (Proactive Community Enforcement Team) Officer** is assigned to the Downtown District patrolling but is tasked with serving as a 'liaison' with community and business groups. The main objective for this PACE officer is to come up with long term solutions to existing issues.
- Additionally, on Saturdays a **Special Duty Officer** is assigned to the Main Street Farmers Market. This 'Special Duty' assignment is at the expense of the Farmers Market. The Officer is also required to be responsive to emergencies and other calls for services in the vicinity.

The philosophy of our Columbia Police Department will continue to be maximizing our ability with existing resources. We continue to look for ways of improvement in key areas. This is accomplished by receiving feedback from the partnerships we have with businesses, residents, community leaders, and special interest groups.

- Chief Financial Officer Jeff Palen and City Finance staff have been working diligently with me to provide **transparent and timely financial data** for City Council and our citizens. Please refer to the following bullets as points of information and let me know if I can provide further clarity.
 - While it is true that the fiscal year ended on 6/30/2013, entries for invoices continue to accrue back to that date through 8/31/2013. This is an accounting rule by Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) that all municipalities follow. Invoices continue to come in after 6/30/2013 for service that occurred prior to 6/30/2013 and this allows us to allocate the payment of the invoice to the proper year. During September and early October we finalize the balances as of 6/30/2013 based on the revenue and expenditures through 8/31/2013. We are completing this process right now.
 - The audit is scheduled to be completed in December. Our auditor met with City Council to discuss the engagement letter which defines the scope and financial commitment (per the contract) and to address any concerns with the Council as required under Statement of Auditing Standard (SAS) No. 99.
 - When the audit is completed, the CAFR will be produced which will contain all financial statements of all governmental activities (General Fund), business-type activities (Water & Sewer and Parking), discretely presented component units (Development Corporations), each major fund and an aggregate on remaining funds. Government entities produce statements which include the Statement of Net Assets, Balance Sheet, Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and

Changes in Fund Balances, and Statement of Cash Flows (business-type activities). For-profit businesses and corporations would produce P&L statements to provide this information.

- Beginning this past February staff has begun to create monthly statements that include revenues and expenditures. Previously there was only a modest report generated and only a few times during the fiscal year. Several have mentioned that this report was not easy to read and we have begun to format the new reports to resemble the budget documents that Council and the public have been receiving for years during the budget process. At each meeting there have been new requests to include new data or prior years' data, so we have been adjusting. By this December we hope to have the report in a format that is favorable for Council and the citizens to fully utilize. While it is a very tedious process to create the reports today, after the format is acceptable, IT will work to add the report to our system in a "dashboard" format that is very transparent.
 - Our outstanding bonds refer to the debt (principal) that is remaining to be paid. Our debt matches the life of the equipment and/or projects completed and ongoing (anywhere from 3 to 30 years). The debt is paid off in increments during that timeframe. This allows the citizens and businesses who benefit from the equipment and/or projects to pay for it during its useful life.
- Mrs. Deborah Livingston, Director of Community Development, and her staff **finalized our City's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)**. This report must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) annually by September 30th. This information allows HUD, city officials, and the public to evaluate the City's performance in making our neighborhoods a better place to live, work and play as we administer Federal, state and local funds. Compliance is critical to this process, and Deborah and her staff remain committed to achieving and exceeding goals and objectives as outlined in our Consolidated Plan.
- City Council approved several items of interest to our citizens in the month of September to include **additional outdoor dining downtown; protocol to allow for citizen engagement prior to Council action; and the appointment of a Bull Street Commission of citizens** to work with Council and staff as the development progresses.
- We are extremely excited about **the re-opening of City Hall Chambers** on October 1st, today! Please join us as we conduct the business of the people of Columbia back at "home."

Please do not hesitate to contact me with your concerns, suggestions and hopes for our City. I take pleasure in my service to each of you!

All my best,



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